

### Abstract of the Invention

Cascaded policing methods and systems are provided which allow lower priority traffic to benefit from otherwise unused capacity allocated to higher priority traffic of a given customer/service with multiple classes of service. The method involves policing packets of a first class in accordance with at least one policing parameter associated with the first class, and policing packets of a second class in accordance with at least one policing parameter associated with the second class in a manner which gives to the second class at least a portion of a traffic throughput afforded to the first class by at least one of said at least one policing parameter, such as a rate guarantee or burst tolerance, associated with the first class of traffic which is not being used by the packets of the first class. The method is easily adapted to an arbitrary number of different traffic classes.